

Yohimbine Fact Sheet

Scientific Name: Pausinystalia yohimbe

Common Name: Yohimbine, *Quebrachine*

Best-Selling Brands: Yohimbe Fuel, Yohimbine Hydrochloride, Yocon, Yohimbe Tea

Historical Perspective: Yohimbine is the major alkaloid found in the bark of the *Corynanthe yohimbe* tree indigenous to West Africa. Yohimbine is a monoamine oxidase inhibitor that stimulates increase norepinephrine release. The bark is used primarily as an aphrodisiac in Africa.

Common Uses: Used in tablet, capsule, and tincture form for increased serum testosterone levels, muscle growth and strength, weight loss, fatigue and sexual function.

Investigational Uses: *Aids:* Functional uses of yohimbine in reducing fatigue in AIDS patients. *Sexual Function:* Investigation of the use of yohimbine as an aphrodisiac.

Common or Recommended Dosages: 10 to 20 mg/day divided into four dosages. One tablet (5.4mg) three-times/ day for fatigue.

Average Cost per Day: Three pill per day cost about \$0.75 per day.

Potential Side Effects: Yohimbine ingestion (4mg to 20 mg) has been associated with side effects including nervousness, insomnia, anxiety, urinary frequency, dizziness, tremors, headache, tachycardia, hypotension, hypertension, nausea and vomiting, bronchospasm and lupus-like syndrome.

Food-Drug/ Drug-Drug Interactions: Drugs such as phenothiazines enhance Yohimbine toxicity. Tyramine containing foods and nasal decongestants or diet products containing phenylpropanolamine should be avoided to prevent a hypertensive crisis.

Contraindications: Yohimbine is contraindicated in individuals with high or low blood pressure, bipolar disorder, existing liver and kidney disease, or patients who are pregnant or on tricyclic antidepressants.

Research Data on Safety and Efficacy: There are no long-term studies of yohimbine safety. Many studies have been conducted on yohimbine and sexual function but there is insufficient proof of efficacy.

Bottom-Line: There is insufficient evidence to support yohimbine as an aphrodisiac or weight loss aid.

References:

1. Yohimbine: Accidental Discovery As Fatigue Treatment. *Aids Treatment News*, John S. James, 18 September 1992
2. The Health Professional's Guide to Popular Dietary Supplements. Allison Sarubin, MS, RD